

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

COUNTRY	Bulgaria	REPORT	<input type="text"/>	25X1
SUBJECT	The City of Plovdiv	DATE DISTR.	16 February 1953	
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In spite of the fact that this report contains old information, it is being disseminated for whatever current value it may have.

War Damage

1. On 7 May 1944 a few bombs fell in the Bunardzhik Quarter of Plovdiv. Several houses were damaged and a woman and two children were killed and several other persons injured.

New Construction Since 1945

2. There has been some new construction in Plovdiv since 1945:
 - a. A workshop for the repair of motor-transport vehicles was being constructed in 1946 one kilometer south of the city; it has not yet been completed, for in the autumn of 1949 the roof tiles were being laid and there is still no machinery in the building; the building is single-storied, 200 meters wide and 500 meters long; and
 - b. Children's nursery homes have been established in the various parts of Plovdiv; Plovdiv has five quarters and each one has such a nursery home.

General Appearance and Landmarks

3. Plovdiv's buildings are generally of brick or stone; none are of wood. They average two stories in height and even the most modern do not exceed four stories. Their roofs are of European tile and most buildings are painted blue.

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4. The main street in Plovdiv begins at Plovdiv Station and runs to the Filipovo Station. It has been separated into three parts: the section from the Gara Plovdiv to Cuma Square is known as the Station Road; the section from Cuma Square to the Maritsa Bridge is known as Turgovska; and the section from the bridge north to the Filipovo Station is called Karlovska.¹ Most of the government and business offices are situated along this thoroughfare.
5. About 200 meters east of the city's most famous square, the Cumaya, is an historic gate known as "Khisar-kapi". It resembles an arch. There is also a monument to the Tsar Osvoboditel (Tsar Liberator) on Bunardzhik Hill.

Population

6. According to the 1948 census, the city's population was 180,000. There has been no abnormal population increase in the past decade, the change in population figures from 175,000 in 1941 to 180,000 in 1948 representing only a normal increase.²
7. The majority of the population of Plovdiv is ethnically Bulgarian. In addition, there are about 35,000 Armenians, 25,000 Turks, 18,000 Gypsies, and about 2,000 Jews. There is no friction between any of these groups. In 1948 an attempt was made to repatriate the Armenians to Russia. The plan did not succeed.
8. The Bulgarians and Armenians in Plovdiv are Christian, and the majority are religious. There are six churches in the city and at the present they are all open.

Railroads

9. The main Plovdiv railroad station is located south of the city. There is another station north of the city called Filipopoli.³ There is a freight station about three kilometers east of the main station.

Buses

10. For local transport there are a few automobiles, owned only by a few high-ranking officials, autobuses, trucks, horse-drawn wagons, and phaetons. There are six buses operating in Plovdiv and quite a few operating in the neighboring villages. The city bus fare is ten leva (old currency); fares outside the city are determined by the distance of the voyage.

Air Transport

11. The military airport outside of Plovdiv is also used for the one-passenger plane which daily makes the Sofia-Burgas round-trip, stopping at Plovdiv.

Militia

12. The chief of the Plovdiv Okoliya Militia in Plovdiv is Asen Ninkov. There is constantly a change in the militia personnel.
13. There are six militia posts in Plovdiv, five in the city and one in the office of the Okoliya Militia. Each post is staffed with the same number of men except the office of the Okoliya Militia. During the daytime the men remain at their posts, but at night they patrol the city in twos.

The Plovdiv Communist Party

14. There are 7,000 registered Communists in Plovdiv but only about 1,000 of these are real Communists, the remainder having registered for the purpose of obtaining food.
15. The Communist Party Club is located at Number 3 Station Road. It is a 5-story building, the highest in Plovdiv, and a former tobacco depot. All of its stories are occupied by the Communist Party administration.

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16. The Party Secretaries in Plovdiv are Khristo Karata and Todor Spartakov. Other Communist officials in Plovdiv originally came from the villages [redacted]

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17. Party members meet twice a week. The Party Secretary collects dues (which are 1,200 leva, old currency, per month) and issues receipts. A member is expelled if he fails to pay for three months.

Hotels

18. Some of the hotels in Plovdiv are: the Bŭlgariya, Splendid, Astoriya, Musalla, Moskva, Leningrad, Karlovo, Mollé, and Sredna Bŭlgariya. All have four stories and charge between 150 and 200 leva (old currency) per bed per night. All types of people may patronize these hotels. Foreigners generally stay at the Moskva and the Mollé.

Theater

19. There is only one theater, the Plovdiv National Theater, in Plovdiv. It is located on the main avenue and in the center of the city. It is a large building whose ground floor serves as a theater while families are housed in the upper section.
20. There are four cinemas in Plovdiv: the Excelsior, Picadilly, Balkan, and Kapital, all of which are located on the main avenue. Soviet films are shown at these.

Sport

21. Football (soccer) is the chief team-sport played in Plovdiv.

Comments

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1. Cuna Square may be a Communist or Turkish name for King Boris Square. According to the maps available in this office, this principal highway between the two railroad stations divides into four sections.

[redacted] Knyaz Aleksandŭr coming between Ivan Vazov (or Station Road [redacted] and Tŭrgovska Streets.

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2. [redacted] there has been an unusual population increase in the past decade.

3. Probably a reference to Philipopolis, the pre-World War I name of Plovdiv, and also the Greek name.

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